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Huntsville Center workers learn fire safety

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. – Primary and alternate area floor monitors at the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville attended a mandatory fire safety training class sponsored by the Safety Office at Huntsville Center Oct. 12. The training was presented by Jason Berlin and Sandy Boyd, fire inspector's assigned to Redstone Garrison's Fire and Emergency Services on Redstone Arsenal.

Berlin emphasized to attendees the importance of understanding the combustion process and different fire classes, fire extinguisher types, operating procedures, capabilities, and limitations, and understanding basic firefighting concepts. Berlin and Boyd, who have been with the Redstone Fire Department for 10 and 19 years respectively, said using a fire extinguisher to put out an actual fire, can be a challenge if people are not familiar with the equipment. They recommended that all organizations invest in fire safety training to test their skills and learn how to use fire safety equipment.

The training included demonstrations on the BulLEX Digital Fire Training System, a simulated "fire-box" used to show how to put out a fire. Berlin said using the tool is also a plus because participants are critiqued and receive feedback from others afterwards. They can see where they may need improvement on their fire safety skills. Berlin said most people do not know their organizations emergency procedures and evacuation routes. It is important that Safety Offices train floor monitors and alternates on how to operate fire and safety equipment, and how to point employees in the right direction during an emergency situation.

"In the event of a fire, who knows where to find the nearest fire extinguisher? Even if you got to a fire extinguisher, some of you would not know how to operate it. Can anyone tell me the anatomy of a fire extinguisher, and give the function for each part," he said. "It is very important that you know exact locations of extinguishes in your area and how to correctly use them, he said. "It could save your life."

Fire Prevention Week was also observed at Huntsville Center Oct. 3-9. The week-long focus was on smoke alarm maintenance. During the course of the week, employees were also sent email reminders about the importance of testing smoke alarms, replacing the batteries when necessary and replacing alarms when they are no longer working.

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